

Robotic Process Automation

Understanding the “Future of Work” and Transforming Your Business

Robotic Process Automation (RPA) is driving technological advancement. The large benefits gained post RPA implementation such as reduced time, improved throughput rates, process adherence, and standardization are pushing many companies to adopt RPA. This e-book helps navigate the best practices that help to successfully implement RPA across the enterprise.

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Introduction

Robotic Process Automation (RPA) has become a buzzword in every industry. What exactly is it though? Put simply, RPA is a type of automation where a machine completes a task that was traditionally done by a human by following rule-based tasks. RPA is not to be confused with Artificial Intelligence (AI) that can be self-taught and learn. RPA will only follow a predetermined set of rules. Once RPA is implemented, it can reduce costs and increase accuracy all while improving service delivery and maintaining compliance, but only if planned and prepared properly.

There are many articles that talk about the numerous benefits that come from RPA. What's frequently not mentioned is who exactly can benefit from RPA and what challenges they face. Although these may pose questions of concern, RPA can be a relatively smooth transition that correlates into saved time and money with the proper information, preparation, and control.

50-70% cost savings
with RPA successfully
in place

Companies that have repetitive tasks that are also high-frequency can expect to see a 50-70% cost savings with RPA successfully in place. However, an [EY study](#) found 30 to 50 percent of initial RPA projects fail. This means that there are large opportunities with the use of RPA especially when the right processes are selected to automate.

The power of RPA can be taken even further and provide more efficient and effective workflows for the hybrid workforce when paired with advanced Process Intelligence platforms like ABBYY Timeline. Not only does a Process Intelligence platform help to discover processes pre-implementation, giving 100% as-is process execution information, but also the two technologies together serve as a control center of operations which alerts management of errors and simultaneously triggers other bots to fix problems. Process Intelligence enables truly intelligent automation.



In today's business climate, it is not only important that businesses understand the power of RPA but also must start using it in order to reap its benefits. This guide will help to navigate the best-practices of RPA for successful implementation and ongoing monitoring and controlling of the hybrid workforce of the future – one that combines human and digital workers.



The Digital Transformation

Business leaders cannot lull themselves into complacency based on present conditions but must keep transforming for the future. Leaders at all levels of the organization need to have a firm understanding of the concepts and tools that are driving a revision of business operations and the way that work is performed. The organizations that adapt to these changes today will be in a better position tomorrow to respond and react to customers' demands, competitive pressure, legislative mandates, and other changes in the business climate. Those who fail to address the customer-centric digital shift will be left behind as competitors focus on their customers and offer a better, more efficient workforce.

We must still deal with the old as we embrace the new! Digital transformation is first about the business and how it operates and then about the technology. Today we can mix old and new and even automated and manual workers. This ability to “wrap” old technologies and automation inside a layer of integrated technologies creates a need for the ability to understand, forecast, and control the execution of a process while seamlessly working with numerous applications and back-end systems.

First and foremost, RPA is about improving business operations. Most of the time, these improvements are associated with work simplification as a major contributor to cost reduction. But a tool is just a tool. The real issue is how to use it to deliver real value. The discovery and analysis activities involved in deciding what processes are prime for RPA are often timely and costly. It no longer makes sense to perform these multi-million-dollar digital kick-off or RPA feasibility studies. The technology available today makes this easy. Every IT system leaves a trail, the digital footprint of business operations. Harness this data and leverage it to make more informed, data backed decisions that give leaders the right information about what processes to consider for RPA. After implementation, integrate artificial intelligence (AI) to develop flexible, highly capable solutions to combine the old, the new, the digital and the manual to truly transform business processes and operations for the demands of tomorrow.

In this exciting and transformative world, where companies are quickly shifting from basic automations to advanced, enterprise-wide RPA, machine learning, and cognitive computing, it's important for organizations to remain flexible and open to change. The one thing that seems clear is that the digital transformation is here to stay and is going to continue to reshape the way we think about business and transform the way business operations and processes are executed.

The new digital operation will be a complexly pieced puzzle of business functions and technologies that will deliver rapid change to the way work gets performed. Leaders need to respond with flexible solutions they can adapt to the next development. Most corporations understand this, with 93% of the more than 900 respondents surveyed for the Forbes Insights/KPMG report “**Business Transformation and the Corporate Agenda**” saying that they have just completed, are planning or are in the midst of a business transformation.

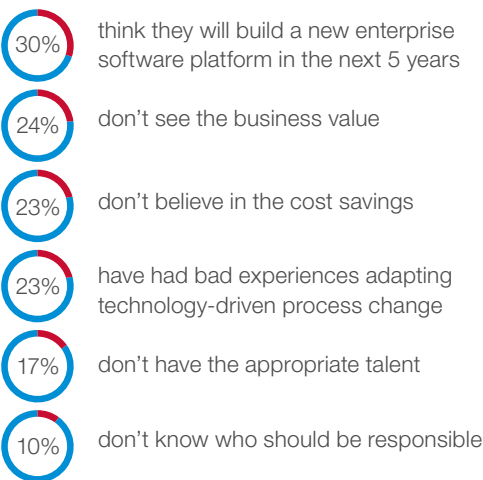
Missing Opportunities to Automate²

It is expected that by 2025 businesses will gain a potential savings of \$5 trillion to \$7 trillion due to RPA. This is because of its large time and cost saving ability when paired with the right processes. Yet it is still expected that businesses will continue to miss out on 50% of automation opportunities. Why are businesses so hesitant to implement RPA?

With all the benefits, at a first glance it does not make sense why companies would miss out on the opportunity for RPA. The visual below shows the top seven reasons companies do not adopt RPA. The leading reason for not adopting RPA is not understanding the company's most basic processes.



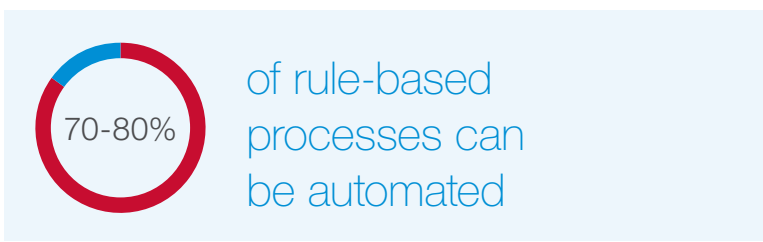
The Remaining Reasons



Source: "State of Automation 2017" Sample: Enterprise Buyers = 400

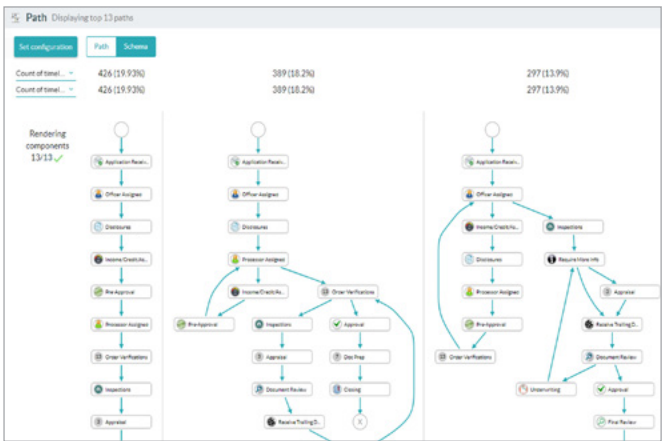
Because of old standard operating procedures, lack of communication cross-departmentally, and what seems like too many exceptions, it makes sense that management does not understand the processes ready for RPA. However, RPA is incredibly easy to use and set up once the company's business processes are understood and there are solutions like ABBYY Timeline that can help expediate process discovery.

Process Intelligence platforms such as Timeline are able to show what pathway the process follows and are an absolute must have during the pre-implementation analysis for existing processes. Process Intelligence allows for 100% visibility, which will not only allow



for the organization to gain visibility of the historical process execution but will also allow for a quick identification of bottlenecks that are causing waste, compliance challenges or rework. Not only can these processes be optimized with this insight, but they could be easily identified as good opportunities for RPA.

One great feature that Timeline offers for data discovery is found in the Path Analysis functionality. As shown below, a diagram will output the process that the inputted data follows. Unlike many other platforms that help with data discovery, Timeline displays every process followed even if it is not the standardized process or doesn't fit on a process schema diagram. This allows for discovery beyond what would be found in a simple standard operating procedure and provides 100% clarity into the business process. With the process Path Analysis feature users can understand every path variation and can compare processes by the count of instances, average duration, average business duration, average number of timelines, average cost, or total cost.



Path analysis: Identify how the process is functioning by displaying the most commonly occurring process paths

Once the path analysis is created a user can further drill down to display the frequency of each step as well as how much time is taken during the transition steps. In addition, this process schema view can be exported as an image as well as a BPMN file. When the processes are shared, it allows for visibility cross departmentally.

With a Process Intelligence solution like the ABBYY Timeline platform, a manager no longer has to be fearful that the business processes are not understood enough for RPA. Additionally, further insights can be gained that expand beyond that of RPA implementation.

The Right Fit for RPA

After discovering the business's processes, the next step is to identify which process to automate in order to experience the full benefit of RPA. It is worth noting that not every process is a good candidate for RPA and that not every process can be automated. Some processes are better left untouched, or for an employee who is able to understand different nuances or the judgments that are required for the process.

In order to ensure that the right process is selected to automate the checklists below help to identify whether a process is a good candidate for RPA.

RPA Checklist

- ✓ The process follows rules based, rather than judgement based decisions
- ✓ The process is repetitive and prone to human error
- ✓ The process follows a clear set of instructions
- ✓ If there is input data, it is digitized, or can be with methods such as OCR

Other Processes to be Considered

- The process has a high volume paired with low complexity
- The process involves data manipulation
- The process has a high rate of error or high impact when errors do occur
- The process runs 24/7

It is important when selecting a process to be automated with RPA that a process with these features is selected in order to increase the chance of success. With a Process Intelligence solution like Timeline, these processes with high frequency and characteristics suited for RPA can be identified with just a few clicks of the mouse and are based on real-world data assuring accuracy and consistency in automation projects.

Additionally, organizations that are new to RPA should consider automating more low-risk or simple processes initially and then move on to more complex processes once the smaller implementations have been successful in order to reduce risk.

Different Industry Uses of RPA



Healthcare

Healthcare professionals spend a lot of time tracking down patient records from various sources. RPA can be integrated to compile patient data together to provide nurses with more time to spend caring for the patient.



Insurance

Insurance companies during enrollment periods require extra staffing in order to deal with the influx. Instead RPA can be implemented to help handle document collections that will free up employees to work on more intensive cases.



Human Resources

Human resource employees spend a lot of time cleaning up data to ensure consistency. RPA can be integrated to help cleanse data to ensure consistency across multiple systems and various formats.



Government

The local government has many processes that are very heavy with data input such as for permit applications and contracts. With the use of RPA, parts of these processes can be automated so that these workers can focus on more intensive cases.

And More!

Benefits of Successful RPA Implementation



Reduced time



Improved throughput



Process adherence



Standardization

The Pre-Implementation Challenge

The introduction of digital workers – while still early in its evolution, is gathering momentum quickly based on the tremendous efficiencies and accuracy it can deliver. Whether your RPA project focuses on automating simple, structured data tasks — or more complex, operations that blend bots with human labor — there is a key ingredient for success: in-depth knowledge of current process execution. Step one to automating any process is to identify the best candidates for automation. Once it is identified as a candidate the next challenge is defining the process. It is necessary to know the process down to its inputs, outputs, steps, rules that manage the process, and any variations that may occur.

To define the business process, businesses analyze historical data. With this insight the process is able to be understood and can later act as the ‘rules’ that the robots will follow. RPA varies from Artificial Intelligence (AI) because RPA is unable to think for itself. Instead it will only act based off of preset steps and will no longer function if there is any variation. This is why it is vital that the process that will be taken over by these robots is completely standardized and exceptions are understood. Utilizing Process Intelligence to discover how business processes are executed enables business leaders to completely understand their business processes no matter what system of record or how complex the process is.

As previously discussed, the Path Analysis and Process Schema tools showed the full business process. Process Intelligence offers numerous tools to uncover the true execution of business processes, and takes the guess work out of process discovery. This is the first step to defining the process. Timeline can even drill down further to other subprocesses. This type of analysis can be especially helpful when dealing with very detailed data.

These processes then need to be recorded in order to code the robots to successfully complete the process. With ABBYY Timeline these steps are easily understood and can quite easily be understood to implement and program RPA implementations.

Use Process Intelligence Platforms to Increase Chances of Success

Tools like ABBYY Timeline help to define the most common path of processes along with displaying all additional variations that will help to optimize the pre-implementation process and allow for a smoother RPA transition.



Monitor Post-Implementation

The RPA life cycle is not over once the bots are in place. It is important that post RPA implementation, the process is monitored and bot performance is managed, controlled, and tracked to ensure accuracy and increase ROI. This is when predefined key performance indicators (KPIs) and standards should be set in place to make certain that the robots are performing as they should be.

When RPA is paired with a Process Intelligence solution like ABBYY Timeline, it will continuously monitor the execution in real time. When a violation occurs, the system will automatically alert users via email, text, or notify digital workers to remediate issues and continually improve processes. This seamless connection creates seamless intelligent automation and prevents the need for a human to monitor a dashboard, simply waiting for

something to go wrong. The combination elevates automation efforts leading to increased efficiency and decreased cost.

With Timeline, the finer details of how bots are working can be analyzed. Users are able to view side by side comparisons of pre and post implementation data. This demonstrates the proof that the bots are performing above, to, or below standards and gives data backed information so process leaders can make adjustments accordingly. Now you can guarantee and ensure positive ROI and easily demonstrate quick wins. RPA paired with Process Intelligence reinforces best practices and ensures continuous improvement from investment. Timeline drives RPA enablement and governance with advanced process mining, analysis, prediction, forecasting, and monitoring and alerting. Process Intelligence is the driving force behind truly intelligent automation.

Change that matters

Look around you, Robotic Process Automation isn't just some farfetched concept of the future. Digital leaders are adopting RPA to streamline operations and eliminate unnecessary inefficiencies. Others are combining RPA, business process management and artificial intelligence to improve their customers' experience and grow faster.

The combination of RPA and advanced Process Intelligence technology creates a risk and compliance framework for truly intelligent automation. ABBYY Timeline combines intelligent process mining with AI powered real time monitoring and alerting to deliver a comprehensive solution for understanding and sustaining process performance. This allows for faster discovery, analysis, and automatic monitoring and remediation of real-time processes.

The digital transformation will require buy-in from all levels of the organization. It's not about a single technology or a single department. It's a skillful blend of managing people and implementing sophisticated analytics, AI, RPA and more. True digital transformation will cross over multiple departments, divisions, and regions. The technology combination will be necessary for understanding, creating and managing an integrated workforce.

Intelligent automation is sweeping through businesses at an incredible rate of speed. Those that embrace Process Intelligence in combination with RPA as part of their intelligent



automation strategy will most certainly surge ahead of organizations that don't. No one wants to get left behind and some are calling the pivot to digital labor a "do or die" challenge.

The bottom line is this: the combination of Process Intelligence and RPA increases control and efficiency for numerous functions. This is something business leaders cannot ignore. Those that fail to capitalize on this type of digital solution as a way of staying relevant will, eventually and inevitably, find themselves replaced by those who have. The questions then remains, which side are you on?

Together, Process Intelligence and Robotic Process Automation can...

1

Identify processes suitable for RPA implementation during the preparation phase

2

Monitor, Build, and Control efficient and automated end-to-end business processes

3

Provide an easy way to manage and control numerous back-end systems

4

Reduce the amount of errors and inefficiencies in operations and ensure positive outcomes

5

Provide monitoring and analysis of RPA performance, promoting continuous improvement of RPA in post implementation phase

Questions to Ask²

Before implementing Robotic Process Automation into your business operations, have you considered the full affect of your newly implemented robotic workforce? By answering these questions it will get you closer to taking full advantage of RPA and seeing a great return on investment. If some of these questions go overlooked it can spell catastrophe for you and your business.

Questions for management to consider prior to RPA implementation

- Is there an organization-wide, business-driven vision defined for the RPA project?
- Has system integration been communicated organization wide?
- Is the process selected the best candidate for RPA?
- What is the return on investment (ROI)?
- When will the organization realize positive ROI?
- Is the process selected properly documented and fully optimized?
- Are the automated processes aligned with the vision and desired value?
- Have key performance indicators (KPIs) been defined to measure success?
- Who will be trained to manage the new RPA system?
- Who will have access over the new RPA system?
- Is the RPA compatible with underlying architecture and infrastructure of the company?
- Will the RPA system integrate well with any further emerging technologies?
- Will there be a knowledge-management repository be created?
- Have security and security breaches been considered?
- Is there a fallback plan in place if the robots have a malfunction? How is this guaranteed?
- How often will the robots be evaluated to make sure that they stay in line with current business demands? Is there an easier way to do this? Hint: Process Intelligence

Sources

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Fast insights. Low effort. No risk.

- Accelerate process discovery
- Reduce RPA deployment costs
- Avoid automating broken processes
- Uncover new automation opportunities
- Quantify performance post implementation

Insights for the Entire Automation Lifecycle

- Pre-Implementation: 100% “as-executed” process visibility to identify, analyze issues
- Post-Implementation: continually analyze to improve & predict, monitor, and alert in real time
- Enterprise Scalability: implement RPA across the entire enterprise



For more information, please visit www.abbyy.com/solutions/process-intelligence
If you have additional questions, contact your local ABBYY representative listed under www.abbyy.com/contacts.

[WWW.ABBYY.COM](https://www.abbyy.com)